



WITH torment, and with shameful
deeth echon,
This provost dooth these Jewes
for to sterve
That of this mordre wiste, and that anon;
He nolde no swich cursednesse observe,
Yvele shal have, that yvele wol deserve,
Therfore with wilde hors he dide hem drawe,
And after that he heng hem, by the lawe.

UPON his beere ay lith this innocent
Biform the chief auter, whil masse
laste,
And after that, the abbot with his covent
han sped hem for to burien hym ful faste;
And whan they hooly water on hym caste,
Yet spak this child whan spreyn was hooly
water,
And song, O Alma redemptoris mater!

This abbot, which that was an hooly man,
As monkes been, or elles oghten be,
This yonge child to conjure he bigan,
And seyde, O deere child, I halse thee,
In vertu of the hooly Trinitee,
Tel me what is thy cause for to synge,
Sith that thy throte is kut, to my semyng?

My throte is kut unto my nekke-boon,
Seyde this child, and, as by wey of kynde,
I sholde have deyed, ye, longe tyme agon;
But Jhesu Crist, as ye in bookes fynde,
Wit that his glorie laste and be in mynde,
And, for the worship of his mooder deere,
Yet may I synge O Alma, loude and cleere.

This welle of mercy, Cristes mooder sweete,
I loved alwey, as after my konnyng,
And whan that I my lyf sholde forlete,
To me she cam, and bad me for to synge
This anthem veraily in my deyyng,
As ye han herd, and whan that I hadde songe,
Me thoughte she leyde a greyn upon my tonge.

Wherfore I synge, and synge I moot certeyn
In honour of that blisful mayden free,
Til fro my tonge of taken is the greyn;
And afterward thus seyde she to me,
My litel child, now wol I fecche thee
Whan that the greyn is fro thy tonge ytake;
Be nat agast, I wol thee nat forsake.

THIS hooly monk, this abbot, hym meene,
His tonge outcaughte, and took away
the greyn,

And he yaf up the goost ful softly.
And whan this abbot hadde this wonder seyn,
His salte teeris trikked down as reyn,
And gruf he fil, al plat upon the grounde,
And stille he lay as he had ben ybounde.

The covent eek lay on the pavement
Wepyng, and heryen Cristes mooder deere,
And after that they ryse, and forth been went,
And toke away this martir from his beere;
And in a tombe of marbul-stones cleere,
Enclosen they his litel body sweete:
Ther he is now, God leve us for to meete!

O yonge Hugh of Lyncoln, slayn also
With cursed Jewes, as it is notable,
for it is but a litel while ago;
Preye eek for us, we synful folk unstable,
That of his mercy, God so merciable,
On us his grete mercy multiplie
for reverence of his mooder, Marie.

Amen. Here is ended the Prioresses Tale.

*Behoold the murye wordes of the Hoost to
Chaucer.*

HEERE BIGYNNETH CHAUCERS TALE OF THOPAS.

The first fit.

ISTETH, lordes, in good
entent,
And I wol telle verrayment
Of myrthe and of solas;
Al of a knyght was fair and
gent
In bataille and in tourney-
ment,
His name was sire Thopas.
Yborn he was in fer contree,
In flaundres, al biyonde the see,
At Doperynge, in the place;
His fader was a man ful free,
And lord he was of that contree,
As it was Goddes grace.
Sire Thopas wax a doghty swayn;
Whit was his face as payndemayn,
His lippes rede as rose;
His rode is lyk scarlet in grayn,
And I yow telle in good certayn
he hadde a semely nose.
His heer, his berd, was lyk saffroun,
That to his girdel raughte adoun;
His shoon of cordewane.
Of Brugges were his hosen broun,
His robe was of syklatoun
That coste many a jane.
He koude hunte at wilde deer,
And ride an haukyng for riveer
With grey goshawk on honde;
Therto he was a good archer,
Of wrastlyng was ther noon his peer,
Ther any ram shal stonde,
ful many a mayde, bright in bour,
They moorne for hym, paramour,

HAN seyde was al this miracle, every
man
As sobre was, that wonder was to se,
Til that oure hooste jopen tho bigan,
And thanne at erst he looked upon
me,

And seyde thus: What man artow? quod he;
Thou lookest as thou woldest fynde an hare;
for evere upon the ground I se thee stare.

Approche neer, and looke up murily.
Now war yow, sires, and lat this man have place;
He in the waast is shape as wel as I;
This were a popet in an arm tenbrace
for any womman, smal and fair of face.
He semeth elvyssh by his contenance,
for unto no wight dooth he daliaunce.

Sey now somewhat, syn oother folk han sayd;
Telle us a tale of myrthe, and that anon.
Hooste, quod I, ne beth nat yvele apayd,
for oother tale certes kan I noon,
But of a rym I lerned longe agoon.
Ye, that is good, quod he, now shul we heere
Som deyntee thyng, methynketh by his cheere.

Whan hem were bet to slepe;
But he was chaast, and no lechour,
And sweete as is the brembul-flour
That bereth the red hepe.
And so bifel upon a day
For sothe, as I yow telle may,
Sire Thopas wolde out ride;
He worth upon his steede gray,
And in his hand a launcegay,
A long sword by his side.
He priketh thurgh a fair forest,
Therinne is many a wilde best,
Ye, bothe bukke and hare;
And as he priketh north and est
I telle it yow, hym hadde alrest
Bitidde a sory care.
Ther spryngen herbes grete and smale,
The lycorys and cetewale,
And many a clowe-gylofre;
And notemuge to putte in ale,
Whether it be moyste or stale,
Or for to leye in cofre.
The briddes synge, it is no nay,
The sparhawk and the papejay,
That joye it was to heere;
The thrustelcok made eek his lay,
The wodedowve upon the spray
She sang ful loude and cleere.
Sire Thopas fil in love/longyng
Al whan he herde the thrustel synge,
And pryked as he were wood;
His faire steede in his prikyng
So swatte that men myghte him wryng,
His sydes were al blood.
Sire Thopas eek so wery was
for prikyng on the softe gras,